

Calling Line and Ice Reading

AVONAIR
CURLING / CLUB

Review...

- Rocks curl in certain directions due to the turn that we put on them
- Our rocks curl in the direction that we turn the handle

Lots of variables influence the curl of a stone...

- Number of rotations
- Release
- Slide
- The ice conditions
- Frost/humidity in the rink
- The sharpness of the rocks
- Debris on the ice

The Different Positions

And their Responsibilities

The Thrower

- Your job is to throw the stone
- Give your team your best line, weight, and rotation that you can
- You are allowed to give immediate feedback after throwing, but that's it (your teammates may ignore you anyways)
- Once the stone has left your hand, stay put and be quiet! Your job is done 😊
- Ask for feedback once the stone has come to rest

The Sweepers

- COMMUNICATION!!!!!!!
 - With the skip
 - With one another
 - With the thrower
- Weight judgment
- Sweeping the stone
 - Faster
 - Further
 - Straighter/curlier
 - Cleaning the ice
- Rock placement
- Relaying feedback after all shots

Important information for the sweepers to convey to the skip

- The weight/speed of the rock (obviously)
- The rotations - this influences how fast it will curl and therefore how much it will slow down
 - Once your teammates are consistent with their throws, information about the rotations may not need to be conveyed very often

The Skip

- Calling the shots
- Thinking ahead - chess on ice
- Reading the ice
- Calling line
- Watching all shots
- Reading all player's deliveries
- Throwing the last stones of an end
- Communication
- Timing
- Catching stray stones
- **STAY IN THE HOUSE!** As you can see above, the skip has enough jobs to do, don't make more work for yourself by trying to do your teammates jobs too

What each position is NOT meant to do...

- Thrower
 - Do not call line or weight - you'll confuse everyone
 - Do not follow your stone - it's distracting
 - Do not sweep - they don't need you
- Sweepers
 - Do not call line - your view is bad
- Skip
 - Don't make more work for yourself
 - Don't try to call weight - you'll be bad at it from where you are
 - Don't help your sweepers sweep - they don't need you

Who has the best view of the sheet always?

And where should they be standing to make sure their view is the best it can be?

The Skip - No Exceptions

They should stand directly behind the thrown rock in order to have the best view of it.

The skip belongs in the house, standing behind the setup, watching rocks travel down the sheet

- Your best view is from behind the house
- Crouched down gives you the best view down the sheet
- Crouched behind the house you will have the best chance to watch the thrown rocks curl down the ice
- From this position, you are best equipped to watch for the **BREAK POINT** of a stone
 - The break point is the moment that the stone first begins to curl. This is crucial to be able to spot as it influences when the skip might want to ask their sweepers to sweep. Depending on the ice conditions, if the skip misses the break point moment, they may lose all chances of making a shot.

**What we have talked about
is what happens after a
stone is thrown...**

What about before? How do we call shots?

What information is needed before a thrower can throw?

- Destination (for guards, draws, and taps) - Shown by tapping the spot on the ice where the rock is to eventually end up. Without this, the thrower cannot know how hard they are meant to throw the rock
- Target - Shown by the target holding their broom, pad side up. Without this, the thrower will not know where to aim when they set up
- Turn - Shown by the target holding up an arm. Without this, the thrower will not know which rotation to put on the rock
- Weight (for take outs and taps) - Shown by one of the learned signals
- If you, as a thrower, do not have one of these things, you cannot throw your shot properly and you should not throw until the skip provides you with the missing information. Wait until they correct themselves to allow yourself the best chance of success.

What is “calling ice”?

The name of the game is *curling*

- Our rocks curl down the ice
- We CAN NOT throw in a straight line - it just doesn't work that way
- It is up to the skip to determine how much they think a rock will curl for any given shot
- The distance the skip thinks the rock will curl is the amount of ice that they will give between the **destination** (where the stone will eventually end up) and the **target** (where the thrower should aim to make that happen)
- The amount of ice will change depending on:
 - How much weight is being thrown
 - How much rotation a particular player throws
 - How much curl the specific sheet of ice has

How to call shots

How to call a draw or a guard

- Tap where you would like the stone to eventually come to rest (destination)
- Determine how much ice you believe the thrower will need - this will change shot to shot as you gather more information about the ice
- Place your broom that distance away from the already determined destination (target)
- REMINDER: A good skip stands with their broom up on its end, right in front of their body, and with their legs apart
- Pro Tip: A good skip uses everything they can to their advantage. This includes always holding their broom for draws and guards on the t-line. This allows the skip to track the ice they are giving for each shot, and ensures that their players are throwing at a target the same distance away every time. In curling, feet (and inches) matter.
- Don't forget the turn

How to call a tap

- Tap the stone that you wish to move (destination)
- Indicate with your broom/voice (or another predetermined signal) how far you would like the stone tapped
- Indicate how much weight you would like your thrower to throw (weight)
- Determine how much ice will be necessary for the shot
- Place your broom next to the desired stone at that distance (target)
- Don't forget your turn

How to call a take out

- Tap the stone that you wish removed (destination)
- Indicate how much weight you would like your thrower to throw - use your voice or your hand signals (weight)
- Determine the necessary ice - remember, the more weight you choose, the less the rock will curl
- Place your broom next to the rock the determined distance away (target)
- Don't forget your turn

Where to hold your broom

- For a guard or draw
 - Always hold your broom on the t-line
 - This gives you a way to reference where you have placed your broom in the past
 - If you hold it all over the place, it's far harder to remember
 - This also ensures that your players are throwing at a target the same distance away from them at all times
- For a tap or take out
 - Hold it next to the stone in question
 - If calling certain shots, you can choose to back up and hold your broom back further along the same line, but not all throwers like that

How do we learn from each
and every shot?

Shot tracking...

- As a skip, you should be tracking all shots - including those of your opposition
- You can learn lots about the ice by watching every shot move down the ice
- If a shot curls too much or too little, you should learn that you need to adjust your ice call or send back information to the thrower that they need to adjust something
 - Usually it is easier during a game for the skip to adjust - major thrower adjustments should be made during practice

Player tracking...

- Everyone throws differently
- It is up to the skip to pay attention to everyone's slide, release, and rotation and adjust their game calling and shot icing as needed
- Use the other team to help gauge the ice, but do so with caution - not every team will throw as well as you and your team

**Let's jump back to once the
stone has been thrown**

**When should the sweepers
sweep a stone?**

The sweepers should sweep...

- If the stone is not moving fast enough
 - Whether or not your skip has told you to sweep or not
 - Your first priority is making sure that that stone has enough weight to get to its intended destination
 - Let your skip know if there is not enough weight and they may change the shot if necessary (or they may just yell at you more to encourage you to sweep it there)
- If the ice is dirty
- If they are told to by the skip...

**When should the skip tell
the sweepers to sweep/not
to sweep?**

The skip should call the sweepers on...

- If the rock is thrown inside or tight to the target
- If the rock starts to curl too much or will not curl enough
- If the sweepers tell them that there is not enough weight to get to the intended destination
 - The sweepers should already be sweeping it if this is the case

**What should the
communication sound like?**

The dialogue

- Once the rock has been released - imagine for a t-line draw...
- Sweepers: "Weight's up, good, or down"
- Skip: "Line's inside, outside, or good"
- Sweepers: "Six/seven"
- Skip: "Line's still nice, it's starting to curl..."
- Sweepers: "Weight's starting to come off... would like to go if we can"
- Skip: "Weight only, line is fine"
- Sweepers: "Got to go for weight"
- Skip: "Go ahead, line is still fine"
- Sweepers: Continually calling line until the rock comes to a stop
- Skip: Sometimes it is helpful to the sweepers for you to place your broom on the ice where you would like the rock to end up, this gives them a concrete target to look at as they sweep the rock into the house

Let's keep in mind...

Curling is a game of plan Bs

You don't always get to play the shot you want to, sometimes you must improvise - the better your team is at communication, the easier this will be

Questions?